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**HARDSHIP,
OPTIMISM,
AND LOVE:**
*The Lives of
Helen Frenkel
and Ada Schmidt*



By:

*Juliet Evelyn
Schmidt*





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HARDSHIP, OPTIMISM, AND LOVE
The Lives of Helen Frenkel and Ada Schmidt

By: Juliet Evelyn Schmidt

Part One - Childhood Memories

It all seems like my childhood was a beautiful memory. I was a girl who lived in a small town in the north of England. I was born in 1924. I was the first of four children. My father was a carpenter and my mother was a housewife. They were both very kind and loving people. I was a very happy child. I had many friends and I was very popular. I was a very good student and I was very obedient. I was a very good girl.

Dedicated in memory of

My grandmother was very kind and loving. She was a very good person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person.

of my

My grandmother was a very kind and loving person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person.

Mother

My grandmother was a very kind and loving person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person.

And

Baba Helen

My grandmother was a very kind and loving person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person. She was a very good mother. She was a very good grandmother. She was a very good friend. She was a very good neighbor. She was a very good person.

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Part One – Life before the War

I'm sure that my mother was a beautiful baby. I saw a picture of her when she was four years old in 1934. She had a gentle and sweet face. Her parents must have been happy that she was a girl because they already had a three years old son named Marrek. They named my mother Anna as her Polish name. Her Hebrew name was Chana Rachel. My grandmother ended up calling my mother Ada. After my mother's birth, my grandmother, Henya decided that her family was complete since she had a boy and a girl.

My grandmother was very independent for the time, 1930. After my mother has born, my grandmother continued to work at the chocolate and ice cream factory and store owned by her husband, Saul, and his brothers, while a housekeeper watched the children.

Henya was extremely bright. She spoke perfect Polish even though she had grown up in a deeply religious Yiddish speaking family that associated only with Jews and that spoke only Yiddish. Her many Polish gentile friends called her Helena. My grandmother had a strong desire to leave the confines of poverty and religion and to assimilate into Polish culture. She was a modern woman of her times.

Henya's father, Herschel Weiler, was a deeply religious, pious man, who wore payehs, or long side burns, and a very long beard. He worked in Lvov, Poland, selling leather. He was very proud of his youngest daughter Henya and would tell his clients about his beautiful, bright daughter.

My grandmother's mother, Sofia Weiler, was a short and stocky woman. She always wore a brown wig over her shaved head for religious observance.

As she grew up, Henya shared shoes with her four older sisters, which were often too tight and small. As a result, her feet developed permanent corns and callouses. She always felt a lot of discomfort in her feet.

Poverty's toll on my grandmother's feet affected my mother. My mother always made sure my three sisters and I had the very best shoes money could buy. When we were young, she bought us "Kalestenik" orthopedic shoes, which were the best shoes for children. My mother was addicted to shoes. She would buy many pairs of shoes quite often, as box after box piled up in the closet. She never wore most of the new shoes. I asked her why she was buying another pair of shoes when she owned so many that she had never worn. She would look at me and smile and say "I like them". My grandmother would tease her when she came to visit us and my mother showed the latest pair of shoes she had bought. My grandmother would ask her if she planned on opening a shoe store. My mother was always self-sacrificing. She made sure that her children had everything, but often did not attend to her own needs. I now realized that her strong attraction to shoe stores and shoes probably resulted from my grandmother's tales of her childhood without her shoes and constant complaints of discomfort in her feet.

Before Henya met my grandfather, my grandmother worked as a cashier in a store. She went to night school and learned bookkeeping. She then became a bookkeeper in a store and worked with an adding machine. She was very good with numbers and was often able to add and subtract large numbers without the adding machine.

Henya was very attractive and when she walked down the streets, men would often whistle. When she was sixteen years old, working as a cashier, a Ukranian judge came to the store and told her that his son had fallen in love with her and asked if she would marry his son, who was a high school teacher. When my grandmother came home that evening, she told her father. Her father told her to forget about the young man because he was not Jewish. Later my grandmother had regrets that she did not marry him. She thought that maybe if she had married him she could have saved many Jews during the Holocaust. Although she had many admirers, my grandmother did not marry my grandfather, Saul, until she was in her mid- twenties. Saul was a very rich man.

My grandmother had four sister and five brothers. She had twin sisters Golda and Slata, and two other sisters, Chana and Shandele, whom they called Salke. Henya was the youngest of the sisters. Her brother, Haskell, died when he was a young boy. Her eldest brother, Alexander, who was twelve years older than Henya, had moved to the United Sated, when he

was in his early twenties to escape the poverty that burdened his family. He moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin and owned a florist shop. He had invested in the stock market and amassed quite a fortune. Alexander married Bertha, shortly after settling in the United States and had one daughter, Edith. Unfortunately, after only a few years of marriage, Alexander and Bertha divorced. Alexander would visit his family in Lvov every few years and often sent money to his parents.

Favel, my grandmother's youngest brother, lived with his parents when my mother was a child. He was learning how to upholster furniture in a shop on the corner of the street where they lived. Henya's brother, Itzhack (Ichu) had opened a sofa store, where he worked. He had two sons, Benjy and Joseph. Nuchu was single and still lived at home with his parents when my mother was a young child. His behavior was odd. He often said that he could not breathe and would claim that flowers were taking his oxygen from him. He would throw planters with plants from the balcony window of the apartment into the street, after complaining that they took his oxygen.

While my grandmother's parents were very religious, my grandmother rebelled after she got married. She had many Polish gentile friends and assimilated with Polish culture. She did not keep a kosher home and her father Hershel refused to even have a glass of water in Henya's home. When she went on vacation with the children, she ate Polish meals such as sausages, stuffed cabbage and pork. But all through her years, my grandmother continued to believe in G-d. Despite my grandmother's rebelliousness against the religious traditions, her parents Herschel and Sofia were very loving to my grandmother, my mother and uncle. Although she was very poor, my great grandmother Sofia once gave my mother a vase that she treasured.

My grandfather, Saul Dampf, was 12 years older than my grandmother, in his mid thirties when they married. My grandmother was never physically attracted to him. He was very much in love with my grandmother when they first met. Although she didn't want to marry him, she married him. Her sisters and parents told her that she would be crazy if she didn't marry him. Marriage to Saul would be a great opportunity to get out of poverty since he was a wealthy man, they told her. Saul and his brothers owned a store that had chocolate, ice cream, fruits and candies.

Saul was a wonderful father and husband. Saul was a kind and gentle man and he did not raise his voice towards anyone. He respected his wife and children. My mother was very attached to her father during her early childhood. He often would take her on walks, the two of them alone to visit his brothers and sisters, who lived nearby, holding her hand as they walked. Saul's sister, the opera singer, sang beautiful songs to my mother. He had another sister, Adella, who was very kind but unfortunately had an abusive, selfish husband. Adella and her husband had two daughters.

Unlike my grandmother, who spoke perfect Polish, without an accent, my grandfather spoken broken Polish. At home, Saul spoke Yiddish with my grandmother. My grandmother had wanted to marry someone who spoke Polish like her. My grandmother always said that Saul never satisfied her physical or emotional needs.

My mother and her brother lived in a one bedroom apartment with their parents and housekeeper. The apartment was crowded. The housekeeper slept in the kitchen and, my mother and her brother slept in the dining room. Sometimes, my mother slept in her parents' bed, between the parents. My grandmother always spoke about moving to a two bedroom apartment but never did. As a strong, independent woman, my grandmother had a temper and was often impatient. She often fired housekeepers when she was angry. Once she argued with a housekeeper because she said that the housekeeper ate the best portion of some soup.

She also argued with her husband, Saul. Saul was often jealous of my grandmother during the marriage. One time during a heated argument Henya took a framed picture of the two of them, threw it on the ground, and broke it.

My grandmother often argued with my mother about food. My grandmother wanted my mother to eat more food because my mother was thin as a child. My mother was not interested in food, although my grandma constantly offered her large portions of food. My grandmother would often bring home chocolate for her two children from the store where she worked with her husband and brother-in-laws. My mother did not like chocolate because she ate it so often. One day, when my grandmother gave my mother some chocolate my mother hid it under her pillow because she did not want to eat it. When she woke up, the chocolate had melted and was all over the pillowcase and sheet.

My grandmother was very close to her son Marek. They seemed to get along better than my mother and grandmother. When my mother and grandmother argued, Marek would take my grandmother's side. Sometimes, when my grandmother was angry with my mother, my grandmother would tell Marek to hit my mother. My mother told me that she used to fear they would both join together against her. My grandmother also would bite or hit my mother when she was angry at her.

My grandmother was very social and had many friends. My mother once went to the movies with my grandmother and a man, whom my mother had never seen before, came with them.

My grandmother went on vacations with her children and sometimes their housekeeper came along. My grandfather stayed home to help run the family business.

My mother was an extremely intelligent child, very advanced for her age. A teacher would come to their apartment to tutor my Uncle Marek. When my mother was only four years old, the tutor was teaching my uncle multiplication. When the teacher asked my uncle what is six times four, my uncle did not respond. My mother answered "twenty four".

Although my grandmother was no longer poor after she married, she was thrifty as a result of her poverty as a child. Once when my mother was invited to a little girl's birthday party my grandmother gave her a watermelon to take as a present. All the children arrived at the party with brightly wrapped presents. My mother felt extreme humiliation as she entered the party carrying a watermelon, wishing she had not gone to the party at all.

When my mother was a young child, my grandmother got pregnant again. Although she had come from a family of ten children, my grandmother did not want more children. She thought that one boy and one girl was perfect. She worked full time and felt that a larger family was not a good idea. She had an abortion. The man who performed the abortion used a hanger. Abortions were illegal in Poland at that time.

My mother's early childhood years were fairly good. She loved having many uncles and aunts and was close to her grandparent and great

grandmother, Sofia's mother. My great great grandmother, Chana Rochel, was a short woman. She used to tell my mother that her back itched when my mother visited her. She would offer my mother a few coins if my mother scratched her back.

My mother and her family traveled on streetcars or took walks to get around Lvov.

My mother's grandmother, Sofia, suffered from diabetes and took insulin to keep the disease under control. One day she ran out of insulin and was feeling quite ill. No one brought her insulin and she died when she was in her early sixties in 1939. My mother resented the family's cheapness, my grandmother's children not buying her the insulin that she desperately needed that day. My mother felt that her grandmother's death could have been avoided. My mother named her first born daughter, my oldest sister, after her grandmother, Sofia.

Part Two – Life during the War

Times began to change. The Russians took over Lvov in 1939. The new government took away the store that my grandfather and his brothers owned. My grandmother became a bookkeeper in a Ukranian firm after losing the store.

Then the Germans took over the city in 1941. All kinds of rumors circulated that things would get worse. A rumor spread that soon all Jews would be forced to live in a ghetto. My grandmother was so very proud and independent. She could not tolerate the thought of being controlled and confined because she was Jewish.

My grandmother decided to escape her fate in Lvov, worrying that life would get worse. She figured that if she pretended to be gentile that she could escape the Germans plan against the Jews. She knew that with her perfect Polish she could easily pretend to be a Pole. She also decided to color her hair blond to look more Polish.

My grandfather, Saul, could not assimilate and pretend to be Polish because of his heavy Yiddish accent. So grandmother left him behind.

My grandmother loved her children dearly. She took her children with her when she fled Lvov. Before leaving Lvov, my grandmother, bought false identification documents for herself and her children with gentile Polish names. My grandmother's assumed name was Sofia Lukofska. My mother's was Maria Lukofska. My mother's brother's name was Kazmierz Lukofska.

My grandmother planned to go to another city where no one knew her and she could hide her identity. She left her husband, father, brothers and sisters, hoping that life would be better for her and her children away from Lvov.

As a ten-year-old child, my mother departed from Lvov and from her childhood to live a dangerous, uncertain life on the run. My mother said that she was robbed of a great deal of her childhood.

My grandmother, born in 1904, was thirty-seven-years old at the time.

My grandmother's plan was to leave Lvov to go to Lublin by train. Unfortunately, while on the train, some Gentiles from Lvov recognized my grandmother and her children. When identification documents were being checked, my grandmother's identity was revealed by the Poles who knew her.

So began my mother's, grandmother's and uncle's flight from the Poles and the Germans, who were eager to turn in Jews to the Nazis.

Eventually, my grandmother and her children went to Warsaw believing that they could assimilate into the large city and live unnoticed.

One day when my mother was thirteen years old, my grandmother sent her to the market to get sugar. After buying the sugar, my mother saw two Polish men were closely observing her. They followed her into a streetcar. My mother was afraid to go home because she feared that the men would find out her family was Jewish. Then, the men would turn them into the Nazis.

Instead of going home, my mother got off the streetcar at a cemetery. The two Poles followed her. The Poles demanded that she give them her identification document that indicated her address in Warsaw. The two men told my mother that they knew that she and her family were Jewish and demanded that she bring her mother and brother to meet them.

My grandmother came to meet the men. But when they saw her, they refused to believe that she was truly my mother's mother. They believed that my mother was Jewish since she had darker more Semitic features. My grandmother had dyed blond hair and her face, especially her nose, looked like that of a Polish woman. The men told my grandmother they wanted to see her son. Because Polish men were not circumcised, the men would know by seeing my uncle and examining him to see if he was circumcised, if the family was Jewish.

My grandmother did not bring her son to meet the men. That night, she feared that she would get caught and turned into the Nazis. She left late in the night and ran with her two children in order to escape quickly. She left behind all her belongings, including the only picture they had of mother's father, Saul. My grandmother was scared that she was being followed that night. She and her children slept on tombstones in a cemetery. The family, still using their assumed Polish names, went from village to village for the next few weeks.

Eventually, my grandmother settled in a village with the Bayarora family. My grandmother was very friendly and was able to obtain their trust.

The economy in Poland was bad during the war. There was scarcely any food. The Bayarovas owned a small grocery store in the village where they lived. My grandmother offered to work in the store in exchange for room and board. The Bayarovas hired her when she told them that she had experience as a cashier and bookkeeper in stores.

The Bayarovas had two sons, Stashu and Waju. Stashu liked my mother and wanted to kiss her once during a birthday party that the Bayarova family was celebrating.

One day, cousins of the Bayarovas left the city of Lublin, which was in turmoil due to the war, to join their cousins in the village. The cousins from Lublin lived with the Bayarova family. The cousins often came to the grocery store. They were jealous that my grandmother and her children were employed and earning money, while they, as family members, were not. The cousins were cruel to my mother and even more so to my uncle. They began to suspect that my grandmother and her children were Jewish. They teased my uncle and told him that he looked like a Jew. One day when he was urinating, one of the Bayarova cousins quickly ran into the bathroom. Before my uncle could pull his pants up, the cousin saw that he was circumcised, a sign of a Jewish male. Upon discovering what had transpired, my grandmother immediately fled with her two children.

At this point, my grandmother was in extreme fear that her identity would be detected and that she and her children would be reported to the

Germans, who were occupying much of Poland. They had barely escaped on a couple of occasions. My grandmother made the decision to separate the family. She left my uncle and mother with families in separate villages, not too far from Warsaw. While my grandmother worked in Warsaw, her children worked as shepherds in the village.

My mother had no shoes. She walked on the rugged icy hills barefoot throughout the winter. The winter was very harsh in Poland. As my mother continued to live in hiding, she still used the name Maria Lukofska. She pretended to be a Catholic Pole, and the family that she lived with made her pray Catholic prayers every night on her knees. Often, the only food my mother had all day was one potato.

Although my mother's brother lived in another neighboring village, my mother met him every Sunday. My mother was lonely, and missed her parents.

My mother's brother was worried that someone would again discover that he was Jewish. My uncle tried to change his appearance. He put lots of gel on his hair and a net over his hair to try to straighten his hair, since curly hair was a common Jewish trait and a very uncommon Polish trait. Marrick also put a band on the top of his nose and tied it tightly around his neck, hoping that his nose would go upwards as he slept. It seemed to my mother that when she saw her brother that his attempt to change his appearance was successful, and that the shape of his nose changed.

My mother and her brother had not gone to school at all since they left Lvov. My grandmother decided that her son should receive an education so she put him in a Catholic boarding school in Warsaw. My mother stayed in the village working as a shepardess. My grandmother continued to work in Warsaw.

My mother was unhappy in the village. She missed my grandmother. The labor as a shepardess was very difficult. Because my mother was lonely and unhappy, my grandmother decided to allow my mother join her and live with her in Warsaw. In Warsaw, my mother went from store to store and sold soap. It was not easy work. My mother always came home exhausted.

One day when she was selling soap, as she was walking, my mother felt blood dripping down her legs. She had left Lvov as a child and was

already an adolescent; she had started her first menstrual period. My mother went home and told her mother.

Although my mother had no formal education, she loved to read. She checked books out of the library. My mother read one book a day. She would stay up most of the night and read in the dark using the starlight and moonlight in order to read.

One of the books my mother read was about a woman, who had sex and got syphilis. The book affected my mother's feelings about men and sex. After reading the book, my mother was scared of men.

My uncle felt frustrated. He talked to his Polish friends in the boarding school about the Nazi's plan. He wanted to do something to help. Marrick told my grandmother that he wanted to join the underground uprising that the Poles were planning against the Germans. My grandmother loved her son dearly. She told him not to do anything dangerous and to stay at school.

My mother and grandmother knew that all the Jews in Warsaw were confined by the Nazis to a ghetto. My mother and grandmother could see from a distance as the Warsaw ghetto burned. My mother felt guilty that she was not there and knowing that other Jewish people in the city were all there.

My mother had very vivid memories of the day that Germany bombed Warsaw. The Poles went to underground shelters in basements of buildings. My grandmother desperately tried to find her son but could not find him. My grandmother did not want to go into a shelter until she found her son. She felt despair and agony that her son could not be located as the bombs fell. My grandmother said that because her son was missing that she wanted to die. The Poles around her insisted that she had to go into the underground shelters and live for the sake of her son and that she could find him later. "You must go on, so he will have a mother after the war," they said.

My grandmother, upon hearing the advise, reluctantly took my mother and ran from basement to basement as each building was bombed. After the bombing, there was not a single building left.

My uncle, against my grandmother's wishes did participate in the Polish underground uprising against the Germans. The Poles hoped that the Russians would ally with them and help them. However, the Russians waited on the other side of the Vishuk River and didn't help. The Russians waited for the Poles to be killed. That way they could take over Warsaw and make sure the Poles did not obtain independence.

Most of the Poles in my uncle's underground unit were killed during the uprising. My grandmother located Poles in the unit but none of them know whether or not my uncle had been killed. No one saw him get killed.

After the war, my mother and grandmother met a girl who was in the boarding school with my uncle. She was shocked when my grandmother told her that he was Jewish and could not believe it. In his struggle to survive, my uncle had made great effort to hide his Jewish identity, by acting and looking like a Pole. My grandmother tried to find her only son, but to no avail. My grandmother did not have time or the ability to find him after the Germans bombed and took over Warsaw.

When the Germans took over Warsaw, they placed all the Poles who had survived into camps for approximately one week. My grandmother and mother were placed in a camp, where they had to sleep on the ground on cold concrete. After approximately one week, the Germans divided the surviving Poles into two groups. The children and their parents and elderly people were sent to different villages. The middle aged people were sent to Germany to work.

My mother believed that she would be treated better if she was placed in the children. As the Germans were dividing the Poles up, my mother made herself look shorter by bending down and called out "kinder", which means child in German. She and my grandmother were taken to a village.

Part Three – Life after the War

After the war, my mother and grandmother were liberated by the Russians. The Russians came to the village and took over.

My grandmother decided to go back to Lvov with my mother to reunite with any surviving family. She had been gone from 1942 to 1945. When they arrived in Lublin on their way to Lvov, my mother and grandmother fell asleep. When they awoke they realized that someone had stolen all their belongings, including my grandmother's address book. They were left with nothing. Someone on the trains on the way to Lvov, told my mother and grandmother not to go to Lvov because they could be sent to Siberia.

Instead of going to Lvov, my grandmother decided to go to Lodz. A female teacher in the village that they lived in before the liberation was from Lodz , and she had told my grandmother that it was a lovely city.

In Lodz, my mother went to school. The children were cruel to my mother. They called her "filthy Jew" and "murderer of Jesus". My mother was the only Jewish child in her class because she had not gone to school during the war. She was behind academically and had to be in a class with much younger children. She felt alienated, like a misfit, based on her religion, her age, and her height.

In Lodz, my mother met a Jewish girl who had survived the camps. She told my mother that Poland is a terrible place to live. She advised her to go to Israel.

My mother and grandmother left Lodz . They went to Germany. It was illegal to leave Poland, but they went anyway. They pretended they

were Greek. They walked and went by train. They had to cross Czechoslovakia.

My mother and grandmother began meeting Jews, who told them about the concentration camps. They found out that all of the family in Lvov had died in concentration camps, except for the husband of one of my grandfather's sisters and one of his daughters. My grandmother's surviving brother-in-law was not a nice man. Before the war, he did not treat his wife well, and he was lazy. He did not want to work in the store and would argue with his brother and sister-in-laws. The Dampf family had amassed a fortune from their business and had buried the gold and cash. After the war, the money was gone. My grandmother suspected that her brother-in-law who survived had gone back to Lvov and taken the money. He and his daughter were extremely wealthy shortly after the war, when every one else was destitute.

When they arrived in Dublin, Germany, not far from Munich, my grandmother and mother were placed in a displaced persons (D.P.) camp.

My mother left the D.P. camp and joined a model kibbutz in Germany, that was set up in anticipation of making Aliyah to Israel. My mother met a girl from Warsaw, who had hidden in the boarding school with my mother's brother. She had a young sister and a mother. Her mother had one leg.

The girls, including the girl from Warsaw, were very promiscuous. My mother was not. While on the kibbutz in Germany, my mother met a Hungarian young man, who was on another nearby kibbutz. My mother met him when the kibbutzes got together. His name was Yehoshua. He had dark hair and was tall. One day my mother talked to him in broken German. They learned Hebrew and were able to speak in Hebrew. Yehoshua put his arm around my mother. It was the first time a boy had touched my mother. My mother was very proud. She told Yehoshua not to touch her. She felt that when he put his arm around her he thought he owned her.

My grandmother stayed in the D.P. camp, while my mother was on the kibbutz. My grandmother volunteered in the D.P. camp hospital, where she met Benjamin Frenkel. Ben was ill with pneumonia after living and hiding in the forest for years during the war. Ben's wife and two daughters were killed by the Nazis in Aishashok, a small town in Lithuania. The men

of Aishashuk went to hide in the forest when the Nazis were coming. They thought the Nazis would not touch the women and children. The Nazis shot the women and children. Before the war, Ben studied in a Yeshiva with the Chofetz Chaim, a very famous rabbi. His first wife worked in a store that the family owned, while Ben studied.

Ben fell in love with my grandmother. A doctor in the D.P. camp also fell in love with my grandmother. My grandmother chose Ben and married him.

My mother went to Italy with the kibbutz from Germany. She stayed in Italy for one year with the kibbutz.

My mother decided to go to Israel. My mother was first sent to Cypress in 1946 with the group. She arrived in Israel in 1947.

While my mother was in Italy, my grandmother and Ben were still in Germany. By the time, my mother got to Cypress, the grandmother and Ben were in Italy. My mother wrote my grandmother postcards from Italy to Germany from Cypress to Italy.

When my mother arrived in Israel, she went to live in a kibbutz, named Tel Yitchak, for one year. In this kibbutz, my mother slept in a tent with other young people. The kibbutz was very secular. Most of the young people on the kibbutz had no moral values. My mother did not have any privacy.

When my grandmother arrived to the kibbutz, my mother barely recognized her. She gained a lot of weight after the war. When my mother told my grandmother that she did not recognize her, my grandmother responded that she did not recognize my mother either because my mother too had gained weight since the war ended. My mother looked like a skeleton right after the war ended.

Because my grandmother had been deprived of food during the war, for the rest of her life she compensated for what she had missed. When I visited her, she would spend all her time in the kitchen, cooking for me and my family. Whenever she visited us, she would bring some food item that she had made or bought. When she watched television, she would eat fruit continuously.

After my grandmother and Ben arrived in Israel, they and my mother settled in Haifa.

My mother worked in a children's clothing store. Ben worked checking if meat was kosher. My grandmother was selling treats, such as ice cream.

My mother was very charming. She always had a smile on her face, and a warm, endearing, kind and clever personality. She was a great salesperson. The owner of the store promoted my mother to manager.

My mother lived with her mother and Ben. She would come home tired and would have to clean and scrub the floors of the apartment. Ben seemed to resent of my mother. He insisted that she pay a large amount of money toward the rent and her food.

My grandmother was very opinionated. She sometimes argued with my mother.

My mother moved out and found her own apartment. She paid less for rent for her apartment and for food than she had paid Ben for rent and food. She enjoyed her independence. She spent her money on clothes and shoes and spent time with friends.

My mother had just survived a war. She did not like to be in a country that was in war with the Arabs. She did not like to live in fear and to see Arabs uprooted from their homes and to see Jews and Arabs killing each other. After surviving the war in Europe, my mother yearned for peace. Although she was an avid Zionist after the war, my mother decided to leave Israel.

My mother and grandmother wrote letters to Alexander, my grandmother's brother who lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Alexander was the only of my grandmother's siblings who had come to the United States before the war. The remainder of the siblings died in concentration camps. Having lost their entire large family in Lvov, my grandmother longed to be with her only surviving brother, and he encouraged them to join him.

Finally, arrangements were made for my mother, grandmother and Ben to go to Canada until they could legally enter the United States.

My grandmother discovered from her brother Alexander that she had a first cousin in Toronto, Canada named Salek, who had survived the war. Salek was a bachelor in his thirties. After the war, Salek married Erna, a widow who had lost her husband and baby daughter in the camps. My mother, grandmother and Ben lived in a boarding house owned by Salek. My mother worked in a hospital doing office work. When my grandmother's brother Alexander came from Milwaukee to see my mother and grandmother, he fell in love with my mother and asked my grandmother permission to marry her. My uncle was twelve years older than my grandmother and was in his fifties. My grandmother thought the proposal was absurd and she told her brother so. He became angry and would not speak to my grandmother for years.

My mother met my father, Ken Schmidt, at a wedding in Canada. My mother was a bridesmaid in her friend's wedding. Her friend Ann married my father's cousin, Ed Jaffe. Ken was very intelligent and good looking. He was a mechanical engineer. When he met my mother, Ken was living in New York with his mother and two brothers.

My parents only knew each other a very short time before they got married. After their marriage, my mother, grandmother and Ben moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My mother worked as a florist with her Uncle Alexander, and my father worked as an engineer. My mother gave birth to her first daughter, Susan, in Wisconsin.

My father had a terrific job offer by Lockheed Aircraft Company, in Burbank, California. My parents, my grandmother and Ben moved to Los Angeles, California in March, 1957. They left the cold weather in Wisconsin and arrived in Los Angeles on a warm day. As my mother looked at flowers that were blooming, she felt content and was glad that she had moved to a beautiful city. My mother and father bought a triplex next door a triplex that my grandmother bought.

My parents had three more daughters, Marjorie, Juliet (myself) and Emily. When Margie was one year old, my parents bought a house. My mother wanted to have a big family since she missed all of the family that was killed in the Holocaust. My mother gave her daughters lots of love.

She sacrificed so much for her family. In spite of all she had gone through, my mother laughed and smiled and had a positive attitude and a sense of humor. She was friendly and always helped others.

My grandmother learned English and spoke articulately. I remember her as woman who was outspoken, energetic, stubborn, proud, giving, and optimistic. She learned to swim when she was sixty five years old when I was six years old and was taking swim lessons with my five-year-old sister Emily. My grandmother subsequently joined a gym, where she went to swim twice a week. She also took classes at Valley College when she was in her seventies. My grandmother loved the outdoors, the warm, shining sun, the beach, parks, and swimming in my family's outdoor pool. She also enjoyed playing cards, reading, and playing "catch" with her granddaughters. She was opinionated and offered words of wisdom based on her life experience and articles she had read to anyone who would listen to her. She encouraged people to eat healthy foods and would say, "You are what you eat."

My grandmother never gave up hope that her son was still alive. Because she had gotten remarried and changed her last name and my mother had also changed her last name when she married, my grandmother knew that her son could not find her. My father would frequently write letters to the Salvation Army, requesting them to try to locate my uncle. During the Cold War, the Polish government did not cooperate and refused to disclose war records to Americans. The search was not fruitful. As a child, I would go to the library with my mother, and look at telephone books from all over the United States to see if a Marrek Dampf was listed. Unfortunately, my grandmother and mother never found him, but continued to wonder if, in fact, he was still alive somewhere in the world.

My parents encouraged their daughters to have good professions. My mother would tell us how important it was. She had missed going to the university since she had to go to work at an early age. Susan is now a psychiatrist. I am an attorney. Marjorie is an accountant. Emily is a teacher.

Unfortunately, my mother was diagnosed with colon cancer when she was only 54 years old. The cancer had spread to the liver. The doctors told her that she only had a few months to live. My mother wanted to live so much. She courageously battled for her life for four years; she underwent surgeries and chemotherapy and would not allow her family to cry for her or

worry about her. When she was in the hospital, she would tell me to go out and enjoy myself. When I was sad, she would say, "Don't cry. I'm still alive. She had one grandson, who she adored, at the time the cancer was diagnosed. She saw three more grandchildren born and my wedding. She planned my wedding with excitement and love.

My mother died at the age of 58. Today, my father has 16 grandchildren. Often, I think how much love she would give all her grandchildren and how much she is missed.

My grandmother died at the age of 100 of Alzheimer's disease. My grandmother had such a strong will to live. She used to say, "You take live as it goes. Thank G-d, I can wake up in the morning and walk and talk." She remained loving until the end of her life. Even when she was very weak and sick, my grandmother kissed my sisters and me. The last words she was able to say were "I love you." If it was not for my grandmother's bravery, my sisters and I and all our children would not be alive today. My sisters and I owe our lives to my grandmother. If she had not so bravely fled Lvov and saved our mother's life, we would not be here.

